Archetypal Literacy for Intercultural Communication: From Noh to Anime and Beyond

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We crossed a bridge and it trembled.
—Annas, a doctor from Ghouta

1. Introduction

In this study, I examine a popular adaptation of a millennium-old Japanese legend into anime: the legend of Minamoto Yoshitsune (1159-1189) and Shizuka Gozen (1165-1211). The ill-fated couple was first briefly immortalized in *Tales of the Heike* (Heike Monogatari), the tales of the Genpei Wars (fought between 1180 and 1185) compiled in the fourteenth century after a century of oral recitation. Their woes were recounted more extensively in the fifteenth-century *Chronicle of Yoshitsune* (Gikeiki). The romantic legend continued to be adapted and transformed over the centuries in noh, bunraku, and kabuki.

In the twentieth century, the legend has been adapted into works by authors as diverse as Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (*Yoshinokuzu* [Arrowroot], 1931) and Yumemakura Baku, author of the long-running series of *Onmyōji* (Yin-Yang Master) novels (since 1986). The status of the legend in contemporary popular memory has been further reinforced by NHK's 2005 historical drama series, Taiga Drama, starring Takizawa Hideaki and Ishihara Satomi. The very existence of the Japanese expression *hōgan-biiki*, usually translated into English as "rooting for the underdog," further assures Yoshitsune's premier place in the popular cultural canon of archetypal heroes and antiheroes, both in Japan and among Japanophiles abroad. Indeed, in 1975, the Japanologist Ivan Morris published an entire book about this cultural phenomenon entitled *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan*.

The anime upon which I particularly focus in this essay is an adaptation of the 2000 Yumemakura novel *Kurozuka*, a toponym which is literally translated as Black Mound. This novel was first illustrated in a ten-volume manga by Noguchi Takashi and serialized in the weekly magazine *Super Jump* from 2003 to 2006. It was then adapted into the eponymous twelve-episode anime directed by Araki Tetsurō in 2008.

My aim in taking up these two endpoints of an ongoing tradition, the original legend and the anime, together with noh as an interim point of transit, is to clarify the utility of archetypal literacy in addition to metaphorical literacy in the promotion of effective intercultural communication, particularly communication in which parties share and learn about each other's cultures, both traditional and modern. I thus take an applied cognitive linguistic approach, not simply cataloging and categorizing the use of archetype and metaphor in literary and performing arts and analyzing how they function, but rather proposing how archetype and metaphor may potentially function in discursive practice to enhance the quality of intercultural communication—how it may be fruitfully exploited in intercultural education, including English language education, for the purpose of promoting intercultural understanding, empathy, and respect for diversity.

In this endeavor, I have relied heavily on the work of Lynn J. Cameron of the Open University in the U.K., especially her 2011 monograph *Metaphor and Reconciliation*. Cameron takes what she calls a discourse dynamics approach to metaphor, and her primary text over the past decade has been reconciliation talks after the Northern Ireland conflict. I advocate the addition of the archetypal perspective in order to anchor metaphor more firmly in specific human relationships—not historically specific but archetypically specific, especially relationships in conflict. This is especially important when dealing with multimodal texts beyond the written page.

I have chosen to focus on Yoshitsune and Shizuka, archetypal fugitives of enduring fame, in the hope that my particular expertise in the genres of noh and anime may open up new vistas in this field. One area where

I especially hope to make a significant intervention is the area of education promoting empathy for refugees and exiles in a world where so many find themselves displaced by violent conflict.

The local legend of the Onibaba demon of Kurozuka is not commonly considered to have any connection with the legend of Yoshitsune and Shizuka, and one may wonder why Yumemakura chose to overlay the two. Yoshitsune, together with his loyal retainer Benkei, is known to have fled to Hiraizumi in Michinoku, in the neighborhood of Kurozuka, to escape the assassins ordered to eliminate Yoshitsune by his brother, the shogun Yoritomo. It is there that Yoshitsune, losing the protection of the Northern Fujiwara dynasty that had originally pledged to shelter him, was ultimately hounded to his death. Traditionally he is considered to have parted with Shizuka either at Daimotsu Bay or in the Yoshino mountains, in western Japan.

However, in the Yumemakura novel, Shizuka resurfaces in Michinoku—as a deathless vampire, her depiction strongly colored by the popular local legend of Onibaba. And as a result of Shizuka's deathless kiss, Yoshitsune joins her in the world of the living dead. Meanwhile, Benkei turns out not to be so loyal.

What might have inspired Yumemakura to take up these particular legendary figures, and to conceive of such a major transformation of the legend? While this study makes no attempt to definitively determine authorial intention, a strong possibility that may exist at the level of a collective cultural unconscious is suggested in the noh play also called *Kurozuka* (or *Adachigahara*).

The noh play *Kurozuka* (or *Adachigahara*, as it is known in the Kanze School; in this study I will henceforth use the title *Adachigahara* to refer to the noh play in order to minimize confusion with the novel, manga, and anime), is one of the plays for which Ernest Fenollosa left a rough English translation based on his collaboration with Hirata Kiichi. Ezra Pound received this manuscript from Fenollosa's widow Mary after Ernest's death, but did not choose to transform it in the unique way that he treated the fourteen plays which he published first in *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (1916, with an introduction by William Butler Yeats) and later in 1917 as *"Noh" or Accomplishment: A Study of the Classical Stage of Japan*. Fenollosa's translation notes have, however, been reproduced in Miyake et al. (1994).

The main character of *Adachigahara* is a nameless woman who shelters an entourage of Buddhist priests, and who appears in their eyes to be transformed into a man-eating demon upon learning that her trust has been betrayed. There is no strong suggestion in the play that she is a reincarnation of the spirit of Shizuka in particular. But in the highlight scene where she spins thread on a spinning wheel, she sings a song which includes allusions to Shizuka and various women in *The Tale of Genji*, and thus is often viewed as a composite archetype.

In the following sections, I will first give a brief overview of archetypal literary criticism, and then demonstrate how it can enhance the standard metaphorical approach by applying it to the various transformations of the legend of Yoshitsune and Shizuka in noh, bunraku, kabuki, and anime in the practical discursive context of intercultural communication.

2. Archetypal Literary Criticism: A Brief Review

According to *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, archetypal criticism developed in four stages.

2.1 The Anthropological Influence

The anthropological influence refers to the work of two schools of anthropology, the Cambridge school and the American school. The Cambridge school was led by Sir James Frazer, author of *The Golden Bough* (1915), and also included Jane Harrison (author of *Ancient Art and Ritual*, 1913) and J.L. Weston. Weston's famous 1920 study, *From Ritual to Romance*, is particularly famous for the influence which it is said to have had on T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. These British scholars took a comparative approach, and they are generally considered to have been attempting to establish a universal pattern, though their work may have been less universalist and genealogical than it is often interpreted to have been. The later American school, represented by fieldwork practitioners such as Ruth Benedict (*Patterns of Culture* [1934], *The Chrysanthemum and the*

Sword [1946]), together with Margaret Mead and Bronislaw Malinowski, took a more particularist stance, focusing more on the differing functions of similar elements in different contexts.

2.2 The Psychological Influence

The psychological influence refers primarily to the application of insights gained from the analytical psychology of Sigmund Freud and Carl G. Jung. Jung in particular developed a systematic theory of psychological types and archetypes which has been extensively applied by post-Jungian analysts for practical purposes such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Pearson-Marr Archetype Indicator.

2.3 The symbolist approach

The symbolist approach refers primarily to the work of Ernst Cassirer, author of the 1946 *Language of Myth*, and Joseph Campbell, author of the 1949 *Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

2.4 Northrup Frye

Finally, the Canadian philosopher Northrop Frye, who first rose to fame for his analysis of metaphor in the work of William Blake in his 1947 study entitled *Fearful Symmetry*, organized these approaches into a fourfold set in his 1957 *Anatomy of Criticism*: (1) historical criticism, primarily the study of modes; (2) ethical criticism, primarily a theory of symbols; (3) archetypal criticism, primarily a theory of myth; and (4) rhetorical criticism, which in Frye's system is primarily the theory of genres.

Frye is considered by many to be the most influential literary theorist of the twentieth century, and this anatomy has become so invisibly embedded in humanities education, especially in North America, that sometimes the source of the system is practically forgotten. Norman Friedman, the author of the *Princeton Encyclopedia* entry, notes in the section on "Powers and Limitations" that Frye's attempt at systemization runs the risk of reductivism (97). To this may be added the risk of false universalism, that is to say, the risk of cultural imperialism inherent in any attempt to apply an essentially Western theory to any non-Western literary tradition.

Applied cognitive linguistics offers one liberating path out of this risk-fraught impasse with its more clearly scientific and objective approach, promising relative freedom from such cultural bias. With such an approach, similarities observed in symbols, images, metaphors and archetypes in different cultural traditions can be fruitfully treated not as items to be inserted sequentially in a universal genealogy of world literature, or as either emanating from or firmly divorced from a Jungian Collective Unconscious, but simply as diverse, independent artefacts that have enormous potential to function as effective bridges in intercultural communication.

Employing such a conscious process of contextualization, we place our beloved symbols and images, metaphors and archetypes at far less risk of cultural imperialism, because there is no latent pressure to force analogies.

Yet another way out that promises to give new life to this critical system is its application not only to comparative culture but to the comparison of what is lost and found, or I would rather say transformed, in translation. I propose that it may also be fruitfully applied not only to intercultural communication internationally but also to intergenerational communication within a culture, especially as the modern Japanese educational system and consumer culture have imported Western culture so extensively.

In order to demonstrate the potential of such an applied cognitive linguistic approach to archetype and metaphor, I will next survey the various transformations of the archetypal figures of Minamoto Yoshitsune and Shizuka Gozen in the noh, bunraku, and kabuki theaters, and conclude with a more focused analysis of their crystallization in anime.

3. A Working Definition of Archetype

The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics defines poetic archetype as follows.

> In poetry, an a. may be any idea, character, action, object, institution, event, or setting containing essential characteristics which are primitive, general, and universal rather than sophisticated, unique, and particular. This generality may be found in any aspect or combination of aspects of a work. Birth, coming of age, love, guilt, redemption, and death are archetypal subjects; the conflict between reason and imagination, free will and destiny, appearance and reality, and the individual and society are archetypal themes; the tension between parents and children, the rivalry between brothers, the problems of incestuous desire, the search for a father, the ambivalence of the male-female relationship, and the young man from the country first arriving in the city are archetypal situations; the braggart, buffoon, hero, devil, rebel, wanderer, enchantress, maiden, and witch are archetypal characters; and certain animals, birds, and natural phenomena and settings are archetypal images. When such elements are treated so as to bring forth their basic, essential, and fundamental attributes, they may form an archetypal pattern or patterns. (95)

This list may be open to questions of cultural bias, especially gender bias, even if it was not intended to be exhaustive; but it does serve as a rough guide. It is also my observation that of the four traditions surveyed by Friedman, it is the psychological tradition that has come to dominate the current field of education in intercultural communication, especially the application of insights from the field of neuroscience into the human capacity for empathy and its verbal expression. And so, for the purposes of the present study, I propose commencing from the more generic system proposed by post-Jungians Carol S. Pearson and Hugh K. Marr called the Pearson-Marr Archetype Indicator (PMAI), which was developed specifically for pedagogical use. It divides the typical human lifespan into three basic stages, each further subdivided into four steps.

1. The Stage of Separation or Preparation: Innocent, Orphan, Warrior, Caregiver
2. The Stage of Adventure: Seeker, Lover, Destroyer, Creator
3. The Stage of Return: Ruler, Magician, Sage, Jester

At first glance, these generic categories too may seem to be claiming some universal status, and so it is important to maintain awareness of the possibility of cultural bias in their application. But as long as awareness of the importance of respect for diversity is maintained, I would argue that this instrument can serve as a useful tool for intercultural communication about cultural similarities and differences, especially in the use and meaning of metaphors.

Let us next test this approach in connection with the legends associated with Minamoto Yoshitsune and Shizuka Gozen.

4. Time Travelers: Yoshitsune and Shizuka in Premodern Literary and Performing Arts

I make no attempt in this study to present a complete genealogy of the literary treatment of these two figures, but focus only on the three stages explained above: the original legend in the quasi-historical epic chronicles, the noh drama, and the anime. Even this limited survey probably presents a vastly greater range of knowledge about the legend than the average Japanese, Japanophile, or student (formal or informal) of Japanese culture may commonly possess. I present it here as context to demonstrate what a rich tradition is actually available, and also to demonstrate the value of a firm grounding in such cultural traditions as a basis for mutually respectful intercultural communication. As we survey the transformations of the legend, let us bear in mind the question of what is so compelling about these figures that they continue to be transformed in so many artistic genres over so many centuries. I especially advocate consideration for the question of how discussion about their significance might serve to foster intercultural communication and understanding.

4.1 Yoshitsune and Shizuka in *Tales of the Heike* and *Chronicle of Yoshitsune*

The only mention of Shizuka in *Tales of the Heike* is in connection with the attempted assassination of Yoshitsune by Tosabō Shōzon (a story adapted in the noh play *Shōzon*, discussed below), in Book 12. Their

relationship is treated in far greater depth in the *Chronicle of Yoshitsune*, in Books 4 to 6. Book 4 includes the story of Shōzon's attempt to assassinate Yoshitsune and Shizuka's role in thwarting the attempt. Book 5 describes their parting, as well as the valiant protection offered by Satō Tadanobu at the Battle of Yoshinoyama, commemorated in the noh play *Tadanobu*. Book 6 relates the death of Tadanobu and Shizuka's captivity in Kamakura, as she awaits the fate of Yoshitsune's heir, who she carries in her womb. The next sections show how these legendary seeds are cultivated in later adaptations.

4.2 Yoshitsune and Shizuka in Noh

There are three canonical noh plays that treat Yoshitsune as a fugitive without mentioning or depicting his relationship with Shizuka. *Settai* is a fourth-category human drama depicting Yoshitsune and Benkei visiting the mother of Tadanobu and his brother Tsugunobu, with Benkei recounting the tale of Tsugunobu's noble actions defending Yoshitsune in the Battle of Yashima. *Tadanobu*, also a fourth-category play, is a direct dramatization of Tadanobu's valiant stand in the Battle of Yoshinoyama; Yoshitsune appears as a secondary character in terms of dramatis personae. *Ataka* is a spectacular fifth-category play featuring Benkei's valor in protecting his lord; here too, the dramatic role of Yoshitsune is a secondary one.

The archetypal elements that may be viewed as contributing accumulatively to the legend of Yoshitsune and Shizuka as it is commonly known today, or particularly prominent in the anime adaptation, include not only the theme of loyalty but also the strategy of disguise. In *Tadanobu*, Tadanobu dons Yoshitsune's armor at the Battle of Yoshinoyama to buy time for Yoshitsune to escape. A related theme is ability to see through disguise, as Tsugunobu's son recognizes Yoshitsune when he visits incognito in *Settai*. Needless to say, world literature has abounded with such examples since ancient times, such as the *Odyssey*.

There is also one play that focuses on Yoshitsune as a warrior before his estrangement from Yoritomo, again without reference to Shizuka: the second-category play *Yashima*. Although spectators familiar with the legend may of course be aware of the later tragedy, I have not been able to identify any particular literary devices that might be categorized as intentional foreshadowing, and so for the purposes of this study do not view it as directly contributing to the formation of the archetype of Yoshitsune as fugitive.

Next, there are four canonical plays that deal explicitly with the relationship between Yoshitsune and Shizuka. Two focus only on Shizuka, and two feature the couple together. In *Futari Shizuka*, a third-category play, a Shinto priest witnesses the possession of a village woman by the spirit of Shizuka. In *Yoshino Shizuka*, also a third-category play, Tadanobu and Shizuka collaborate to sway public opinion which has turned against Yoshitsune; but the primary focus of the play is the persuasive power of beauty in Shizuka's dance. The fourth-category play *Shōzon* is named for the main character, with Yoshitsune and Shizuka cast in secondary roles. The fifth-category play *Funa Benkei* exhibits the most complex dramatic structure, with the lead actor performing the role of Shizuka in Act One (with Yoshitsune and Benkei as secondary characters), and then demonstrating their artistic genius by switching roles to play the ghost of Tomomori in Act Two, in a fantastic battle with Yoshitsune and Benkei.

In addition to the theme of loyalty which is common to all plays in this group, there are several noteworthy archetypal and metaphorical elements here that may be viewed as contributing accumulatively to the legend of Yoshitsune and Shizuka as it is commonly known today. The strategic art of disguise reappears in the possession scene in *Futari Shizuka* as well as in the actions of Tadanobu and Shizuka in *Yoshino Shizuka*, as they both pretend to be uncommitted strangers. Dissimulation is also a major theme in *Shōzon*, as Shōzon uses an artful deception to try to hide the fact that he has been sent to Kyoto to assassinate Yoshitsune. One new archetypal theme in *Funa Benkei* is the emphasis on the perception of the spiritual vs. the physical world. When the ghost of Tomomori first appears to rise from the waves after Yoshitsune and Benkei set sail from Daimotsu Bay, leaving Shizuka behind, Yoshitsune sees it as a real enemy and draws his sword to battle it. Benkei intervenes and draws out his rosary instead, seeing it as a spiritual battle rather than a physical one. The question of a connection between the absence of Shizuka and the eruption of the storm at sea is a tantalizing one.

The indirect reference to Shizuka in the noh play *Adachigahara* should also be recalled in this connection, as the song the woman recites, the song which Shizuka sang in defiance when she was forced to perform for

the shogun who ordered Yoshitsune's assassination (recounted in Book 6 of *Chronicle of Yoshitsune*), is the song which Shizuka also sings when she possesses the village woman in *Futari Shizuka*.

> *shizu ya shizu, shizu no odamaki kurikaeshi*
> *mukashi o ima ni nasu yoshi mogana*
> (Hush, be humble, like the shizu cloth [woven from thread from] a humble woman's spool;
> Just as it loops around, so I wish I could bring back the past.)

In this translation, I attempt to replicate the layered effects of *shizu*, which refers not only to a woman of humble birth but also the name of the cloth she weaves, and is also at the root of the word *shizuka* meaning quiet. Hence, the name Shizuka might be poetically translated as Serenity, and that meaning is constantly exploited in the poetry of noh, especially in *Funa Benkei*, to suggest the symbolic significance of her presence providing spiritual calm and comfort in the face of adversity.

Indirect references to Yoshitsune may also be found in three other plays: *Ohara Gokō*, *Kagekiyo*, and *Nishikido*. *Nishikido* is particularly relevant to the present discussion in that it also depicts an archetypal situation of discord among heirs—the three heirs of the Northern Fujiwara in Hiraizumi, who had originally pledged to protect Yoshitsune. The elder two sons of Hidehira, Kunihira (Nishikido no Tarō) and Yasuhira, give in to pressure from the shogun Yoritomo. Only Tadahira (Izumo no Saburō) remains loyal to Yoshitsune, out of respect for the wishes of his deceased father. Their story thus parallels the tragic conflict between Yoritomo and Yoshitsune.

4.3 Yoshitsune and Shizuka in Bunraku and Kabuki

Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees (Yoshitsune Senbonzakura) was originally written for the puppet theater in 1747, and adapted for performance in the kabuki theater in 1748. It is a long play, in five acts, but the most popular act which is usually performed independently is Act Four, which opens with Shizuka seeking to be reunited with Yoshitsune in the mountains of Yoshino. A professional shirabyōshi performer who often plays the drum as she dances, Shizuka plays a drum which she received from Yoshitsune as a parting gift as she travels along, and the sound of the drum seems to draw a white fox to join her. This white fox is actually a shape-shifter who sometimes takes the form of Tadanobu to protect Shizuka but is actually drawn to the drum because it was made from the skins of its parents. The shape-shifting theme is rooted in the story of how Tadanobu borrowed Yoshitsune's armor to deceive the assassins who were pursuing his master, thus allowing Yoshitsune to escape. Thematically speaking, it is a classic dramatization of the archetypal theme of man's inhumanity to man, ironically contrasting the cruelty of Yoritomo with the filial sentiments of the fox. This is the theme which is also taken up by Tanizaki in *Arrowroot*.

The 1939 kabuki dance play *Kurozuka* is also in line with this tradition of tempering a more extreme tale of cruelty, in this case, the Onibaba legend (famously illustrated in gory detail by Tsukioka Kōgyo) and rather focusing on the human side of the demon, depicting her struggle with her baser emotions, which are aroused by the recollection of the trauma which compelled her to become a serial killer.

The fifth-category noh play *Ataka* has also been adapted into the kabuki theater with the title *Kanjinchō.*

5. Yoshitsune and Shizuka in the Anime *Kurozuka*

To what degree does the anime *Kurozuka* carry on this tradition? For the purposes of this exploratory study, I will survey the elements which manifest in the first episode, which customarily establishes the foundations of the story. In the process, I will suggest ways that various connections may be drawn in diverse forms of intercultural discourse. One typical scenario might be a lesson in Japanese culture for non-Japanese students; but I would rather focus on the implementation of the preceding observations in English lessons for Japanese students—not only on how to unilaterally share their culture with people from other countries, but with an emphasis on two-way sharing that engenders mutual respect, fostering pride without arrogance.

Although overseas performances of noh have become more popular in recent years, it is still highly inaccessible to people living outside Japan, even in the age of the Internet and YouTube. Anime is far more

popular and accessible, and in this selection I wish to highlight the way that judicious choice of works such as *Kurozuka*, works which combine both traditional and popular culture, can be especially effective in fostering quality intercultural communication. The following subsections introduce just a few of the many points where connections may be fruitfully drawn, with some guidance on how to design related lessons, especially to prevent lapses into stereotypical interpretation.

5.1 Opening Scene

Episode 1 of the anime *Kurozuka* opens with the sound of a noh flute and a voice chanting the opening lines of the noh play *Adachigahara*. And yet anyone who has even the briefest acquaintance with the art of noh will recognize that this is not a scene being performed in a noh theater. The shape of the room differs from that of a noh stage, as do the lighting and the windows. The lines chanted are those spoken by the traveling priest in the play, a character who is normally not masked. But the performer in the anime is wearing a masculine demon mask and a bright red demon's wig. The viewer may initially wonder whether this is simple unfamiliarity or ignorance of traditional Japanese culture, whether willful or unintended, on the part of the creator. But by the end of the episode, it becomes clear that the masked figure is not a noh actor performing a play but the leader of a shadow organization who may enjoy performing noh privately as a hobby or form of spiritual discipline (as do many well-to-do Japanese) but who also uses the mask to hide his identity.

Knowledge may be power, but one risk that is often observed in intercultural communication is that a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing. Individuals who are curious about other cultures and have availed themselves of a certain degree of information can often overestimate the extent of their knowledge, and run a high risk of misrepresenting others. Starting with the very opening scene of this popular form of entertainment, the educator may proceed to design a useful orientation lesson about this risk and the importance of keeping an open mind to learning about one's own culture as well as that of others.

5.2 Characterization

The opening scene looks like a postmodern, post-disaster urban jungle. But the first main character to appear, a modern-looking man with obviously supernatural powers, immediately jumps off the roof of a high-rise building and seems to metamorphose into a crow and travel through time back to medieval Japan. When he lands on the ground, he is dressed as a Buddhist priest. The viewer somewhat familiar with the plot of the anime series may immediately wonder, is this the warrior-priest and loyal retainer Benkei? In fact, it soon transpires that it is Yoshitsune; both men are dressed as pilgrims in order to disguise Yoshitsune's identity. The dialogue immediately places them in the medieval context of being on the run from the shogun Yoritomo. After an attack where Benkei once more saves Yoshitsune's life, Yoshitsune wonders why Benkei remains so loyal to him. He tells Benkei that even if he betrayed him now, he would have no regrets—foreshadowing a later betrayal as well as establishing an archetypal theme that might provide an effective prompt for sharing stories from other cultures on the same theme.

The spectator's first view of the Shizuka figure (called Kuromitsu, meaning black nectar or molasses, suggesting a trap) is from the feet up. She is wearing white tabi, the traditional socks worn with kimono, and a red kimono, and has long black hair. Though no attempt will be made here to determine authorial intent but only to indicate potential effects and connections, the red-white-black color scheme is an archetypal one which replicates that of the world of demons in noh, where a demon may be portrayed with wigs of any of these three colors, the colors corresponding to various degrees of evil. Kuromitsu immediately sees through the men's disguise and judges that the servant is in fact the master—the archetypal theme of the noh play *Ataka* and the kabuki play *Kanjinchō*.

5.3 Archetypal Taboos

Yoshitsune and Benkei find their way to a house where they seek lodging for the night. Yoshitsune immediately collapses with fatigue, consistent with his legendary characterization as an underdog—not so much a powerful warrior physically speaking, but rather frail in physique and yet endowed with intellectual leadership qualities. But there is a visual suggestion that his collapse is not only due to physical fatigue but to some entrancement upon seeing Kuromitsu. She decides to trust them (echoing the theme of loyalty

between master and retainer) and guides them to the interior of her residence, asking only that they not look into the back room where she sleeps—the archetypal taboo that is the theme of the noh play *Adachigahara* as well as Japanese myths and folktales such as the story of Urashima Tarō. Here is another theme that may be fruitfully explored. Parties in intercultural dialogue may search together for other cultural analogues such as the Greek myth of Pandora's box and ponder their significance together, or discuss customary etiquette for dealing respectfully with different taboos in different cultures.

Kuromitsu and Yoshitsune embrace and kiss, and speak of the futility of the will to resist destiny—another archetypal conflict which may inspire thoughtful comparative discussion. But in Benkei's absence, Yoshitsune hears a sound coming from the prohibited back room and is compelled to investigate. There he learns Kuromitsu's secret, the source of her eternal life—yet another perennial question to which various answers are provided in various spiritual traditions. The episode ends with her invitation to him to join her for eternity, to the end of time.

The depiction of Yoshitsune's attraction to Kuromitsu further provides a promising platform for the exploration of another crucial theme in multicultural education and intercultural communication—the exploration of gender roles in various cultures in a way that promotes recognition for the role of social conditioning and cultural diversity.

6. Conclusion

"We crossed a bridge and it trembled." This poignant phrase, uttered by a doctor named Annas from Ghouta, was taken by Wendy Perlman as the title of her collection of testimonies by Syrian refugees. The bridge is one of the most common metaphors used to express the hope for peaceful and respectful communication, both interpersonal and intercultural, a quality which cannot be achieved without empathy. The bridge that connects the noh stage to the backstage dressing room suggests a link to another world, and flute and drums reverberate as incarnate spirits tread the boards. How universal is this spirit of empathy? Can the concept of universals be recuperated and separated from oppressive universalism? Are all the rights listed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights universal? Is it possible to respect them all simultaneously? That document can serve as a useful starting point for such discussions of cultural relativism.

Claire Kramsch, author of *The Multilingual Subject* (2009), dedicated that volume to the philosophy professor who taught her about "the symbolic power of myth to understand the relation of language and culture, especially with regard to the multilingual subject" (viii), while in *Metaphor and Reconciliation*, her study of the use of metaphor in reconciliation talks in Northern Ireland, Lynn J. Cameron makes this observation.

> Metaphor helps a speaker find ways to describe themselves, their experiences and their feelings. More than that, metaphors can show how these descriptions are designed with the other person in mind, i.e. dialogically: for example, using a metaphor that was previously used by the other can create some temporary solidarity prior to asking a confrontational question. Metaphor is often used in the coda of an explanation or narrative, to summarise the main point while also summarising the speaker's attitudes and values in respect of the content. The movement of metaphors across speakers in continuity episodes is particularly interesting in the study of developing empathy. (40)

It is my hope that this study will contribute to this global project to promote a heightened sensitivity among teachers and students to the potential of archetype and metaphor to develop the sort of empathy which I for one deem a most valuable competency that should occupy a prominent place in the portfolio of anyone who aspires to true global citizenship.

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